

REGIONAL OVERVIEW

THE ANDES

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IV. REGIONAL OVERVIEW

A. General Context

This regional overview will focus on the three Andean countries incorporated into the assessment framework for CETT—Bolivia, Peru, and Ecuador.

The three countries are geographically diverse and fragmented, with some parts dominated by the Andes mountain range and others the Amazon jungle. The mountainous terrain contributes to social fragmentation and economic difficulties, as do natural disasters, such as volcanic tremors and earthquakes. The weather phenomena of *El Niño* and *La Niña* in Peru have caused serious flooding in coastal areas, as well as mudslides throughout the region. Rain damage from these weather phenomena often brings about loss of life and property, sometimes in the billions of dollars. In addition, the region often suffers from dry spells and drought.

People of mixed white and Indian descent, *mestizos*, are almost outnumbered by the indigenous people that inhabit the region. Bolivia's indigenous inhabitants comprise 56.8 percent of the total population or 4.1 million people. Peru has 9.1 million indigenous inhabitants or 40.8 percent of the total population. Ecuador has an indigenous population of 3.1 million or 29.5 percent of the total population. In these three countries, there are 65 languages spoken. After Spanish, the most prevalent languages are Guarani, Aymara, Quechua, and Shur.

A historically segmented society, the region is primarily poor, with low levels of education, health, and nutrition. With a severely low GDP, Bolivia is one of the poorest countries in the region. Infant mortality stands at 69 per 1000 live births, while 10 percent of children under five are malnourished. Because it is landlocked and has a limited communications infrastructure, Bolivia does not have significant access to export markets. The stratified society and political instability in Bolivia mean that despite the successful economic stabilization of 1985-1998, little progress in the war on poverty has been achieved.

Political fragmentation and unsteadiness have made the pursuit of long-term economic stability almost impossible in the region. In 1998, the economic growth rate in Ecuador had slipped to negative 1.5 percent and, in 1999, a devastating blow to the economy brought the growth rate plummeting to negative 10 percent. It is estimated that 70 percent of Ecuadorean society lives in poverty. Ecuador's tumultuous economy in the last decade puts the four million poor citizens at increased risk, especially as the newly dollarized economy struggles to stabilize.

Increasing numbers of children working instead of attending school and weak funding for education across the region indicate an alarming direction for education in these three Andean countries. According to the World Bank (*La pobreza en el Peru, 1999*), the national census in Peru showed that approximately half a million children were working, while other reports increased that number to a million and a half.

In the region, political instability, corruption, and economic downfall have caused a migration to the larger cities, which has burdened the urban school system with indigenous students whose first language is not Spanish. As the increasing population finds no outlet for employment, many seek employment elsewhere, some as far north as the United States. Scores of qualified teachers have left the country, many settling in Colombia, Costa Rica or Mexico.

Table 1. Basic Social and Economic Indicators

Country	Population (in millions) 1998	Av. Annual Rate of Pop. Growth (%) 1990-1997	Population ages 6-14 (thousands) 1997	GDP per capita (PPP) 1998	Life expectancy at birth (yrs.) 1998	Adult Literacy (% ages 15+) 1998
Bolivia	8	2.4	1,734	2,269	61.8	84.4
Ecuador	12	2.2	2,478	3,003	69.7	90.6
Peru	25	1.8	5,032	4,282	68.6	89.2

Source: The World Bank, World Development Indicators, 2000; UNESCO and UNDP

State of education in the region

The Andean region has been scenario of deep education reforms during the past decades. However some of these efforts have fallen short when confronted with a structural reality of even more decades of poverty, inequality and lack of access to the school system. The number of people whom never received education is very high in the region, and even though those numbers tend to drop for the younger generations, some youngsters are functional illiterates with very few years in school and an extremely primitive set of reading and writing skills.

Table 2. Estimated number of illiterates by age, both sexes

Country	Year	Age											
		total	15-19	20-24	25-29	30-34	35-39	40-44	45-49	50-54	55-59	60-64	+65
Bolivia	1990	809,144	40,288	45,992	51,860	62,417	73,022	81,162	79,859	83,595	75,980	75,985	138,984
	1995	745,434	30,854	39,040	44,455	50,391	60,516	70,545	77,876	75,965	78,325	69,309	148,158
Ecuador	1990	760,903	37,320	43,586	51,946	58,494	72,082	67,323	72,480	73,137	72,078	62,806	149,651
	1995	719,466	31,064	37,067	43,208	51,397	57,743	70,898	65,883	70,418	70,217	67,880	153,691
Peru	1990	1,846,614	90,748	104,574	113,373	122,515	147,987	172,699	184,184	207,926	200,736	166,123	335,749
	1995	1,736,222	75,737	89,686	102,360	110,998	120,252	145,176	168,693	178,459	198,884	188,069	357,908

UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2002

Another big factor for the lack of extensive and lasting effect of the reform is the allocation of the resources. The statistics in the table below on public expenditure on education reflect the lack of funds available to follow up on educational reforms and reinforce teacher training, salaries, and classroom support

Table 3. Andean indicators

Indicators	Bolivia	Ecuador	Peru
As % of GNP	5	4	3
As % of total govt. exp.	11.1	13.0	19.2

Table 2. Public expenditure on education by country, 1996

Source: UNESCO, Statistical Yearbook 1998

Like the rest of Latin America, the Andean region is characterized by a large percentage of teachers with poor preparation, a high percentage of students that leave the educational system at early ages and enter the workforce with inadequate quantity and quality of education. Other factors that help explain the difficult educational reality in the Andean region include repetition, late enrollment, absenteeism, and unprepared, often undernourished, entering primary-school students.

While some statistics in the figure below, such as net primary enrollment, give encouragement, other numbers point to a prevalent situation in the region. Numbers of total primary-school enrollment are higher than the population of primary school-age children due in large part to overaged students who attend primary school.

Table 4. Access to Education Indicators

Indicators	Bolivia	Ecuador	Peru
Population (1999-2000)	8.1 million	12.4 million	25.7 million
Primary school-age population (1998)	1,597,446	1,679,595	3,400,925
Total enrollment in primary education (1998)	1,705,551	2,457,454	4,144,379
Net Primary Enrollment (%) (1999)	97	97	96
Primary Student/Teacher Ratio (1997)	22	28	27
Primary-School Teachers (2001)	38,737	32,279	72,641

Sources: UNESCO, UNDP, WORLD BANK, PREAL

In Peru, only one out of three children attends school, with the school dropout rate among 12-year olds the highest. Children were forced to work so that families could survive in the face of the drastic restructuring of the economy in the 1990s, which increased poverty by 55 percent. Statistics below elucidate the dropout problem in Peru, which persists even with the apparent improvement in literacy rates. The dropout numbers are specially striking among the female population at the elementary school level. At the secondary

school level, the situation tends to reverse with more school survival among female students.

Table 5. Students repeating and dropping out of school in Peru

Gender	Primary						Secondary				
Male students	1 st .	2 nd .	3 rd .	4 th .	5 th .	6 th .	1 st .	2 nd .	3 rd .	4 th .	5 th .
Promoted to another grade (%)	87.6	79.3	82.3	87.2	89.1	88.4	84.1	86.2	86	89.8	87.7
Repeated (%)	5.6	18.9	15.9	10.6	7.5	3.8	8.3	8.5	6.7	4.1	2.4
Dropped out (%)	6.8	1.8	1.8	2.2	3.3	7.9	7.6	5.3	7.4	6.1	9.9
Female students											
Promoted to another grade (%)	88.6	77.5	81	87.3	89.9	87.5	88.3	89.1	90.1	93.3	90.3
Repeated (%)	5.1	17.7	14.9	9.5	6.0	3.1	5.5	5.6	4.3	2.5	1.5
Dropped out (%)	6.3	4.7	4.1	3.2	4.1	9.4	6.1	5.3	5.6	4.2	8.2

Source: “El Desarrollo de la Educación” (Informe nacional de la República del Perú, elaborado por el MED para UNESCO, 2001)

Bolivia’s educational situation is characterized by a large number of young children entering the school system suffering from malnutrition and lack of stimulation in their early years which affects their ability to learn. On top of that, a high percentage of students continue to leave the educational system and enter the labor market with inadequate quantity and quality of education. There they join a large number of uneducated workers as a legacy of past neglect

Table 6. Years in school, Bolivia

Year	Average years of schooling completed for those leaving the school system	Percentage of those leaving the school system having completed 12 years
1975	5.5	11%
1985	6.5	17%
1995	6.9	20%

World Bank, Education Quality and Equity Strengthening Project, May 1998

Bolivia’s education shows also inequality regarding access to education based on gender. This tendency is most notorious in the rural areas, where the difference of attendance between males and females averages 7.6%; in the urban areas, the difference is 3.3%. In both places, the difference tends to accentuate with the age of the students.

Table 7. School attendance, Bolivia

Age groups	Urban total	Urban females	Urban males	Rural total	Rural females	Rural males
6 to 19	82.5%	80.9%	84.2%	62.9%	59.3%	66.2%
6 to 14	90.9%	90.1%	91.6%	74.9%	71.6%	78.1%
15to 19	65.9%	63.3%	68.6%	29.3%	24.3%	33.8%

World Bank, Education Quality and Equity Strengthening Project, May 1998

During the past decades, Ecuador has been making efforts to bring access to school for children in the whole territory. The school coverage is of 89%, a high number comparing with other Latin American countries. However, an important number of children still do not complete their primary education and the little education they receive is inefficient and of very low quality. Of 100 children entering the school system, only 67 graduate in the cities and only 36 graduate in the rural areas.

Table 8. Ecuador Indicators

	Repetition rate	Drop out rate	Percentage of children at school age attending school	Graduates for every 100 students
Urban	9.7%	17%	90.2%	67
Rural	15.2%	34%	87.7%	36

IDB, Programa de Redes Escolares Autonomas Rurales, 1998

B. Education Trends with Implications for CETT Design

Assessment team members found that a number of trends in the Andean region have implications for the CETT design. Taking these trends into consideration at the early stage of CETT development can increase the potential for successful implementation